**Harmful effect of Higher Nickel Content ta C&ocotttes**

315. SHRI KAPIL VERMA: KUMARI

ALIA: CHOWDHRY HARI SINGH:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Environment Research Laboratory at Lucknow has conducted a study of some leading brands of chocolates manufactured in the country;

(b) whether a number of themi have been found to contain nickel above the permissive level; and

(c) if so, whether this can be very harmful to children particularly, rendering them vulnerable to various infections and dreaded diseases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SMT. D. K. THARADEVI SIDDHARTHA): (a) to (c) No such study has come to the notice of the Directorate General of Health Services indicating that some leading brands of chocolates manufactured in the country have any content of nickel.

**Lacunae in N. D. P. S. Act**

3! 6. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an Operation Research Group Survey on drug abuse in the country's four metropolitan cities has found Chat judges and other experts from concerned disciplines have felt that the inflexibility of the Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act was proving counterproductive to tackle the menace;

(b) if so, what are the lacunae found in the existing Act; and

i (c) the effective measures being taken to give more teeth to the Act in the light of the above study?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRI OF, FINANCE (SHRI *RAMESHWAR* THAKUR): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Welfare had commissioned a survey on the subject by the Operations Research Group. They have very recently received the report and are examining it. Appropriate action will be taken after the examination is complete.

**Powers to States under the forest (Conservation) Act, 1980**

317. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the States have not been giv^n any power under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980;

(b) whether State Governments have represented to the Central Government in this regar^;

(c) if so, whether Government propose to delegate some powers under the Forest (Conservation) Act to the States; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not. the reason$_s$ therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH)-

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) Relaxations and simplification in the rules and guidelines have already been made to expedite approval of clearances under tfoe Forest (Conservation) Act 1980. This is in keeping with the recommendations made in the State Forest Ministers' Conference held in 1989 which favoured simplification of procedure and delegation to the Regional offices. of the Ministry .which, has been carried out. In the circumstances no delegation of powers is necessary.